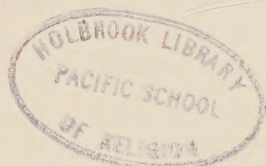


ECUMENICAL PRESS SERVICE

Published under the auspices of the : World Council of Churches · International Missionary Council
World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations · World Young Women's Christian Association
World's Student Christian Federation · World Council of Christian Education · United Bible Societies

EDITORIAL OFFICE · 17 ROUTE DE MALAGNOU · GENEVA · SWITZERLAND
TEL. 36 71 30 · CABLES OIKOUMENE
U.S. ENQUIRIES : WCC, 475, RIVERSIDE DRIVE, NEW YORK 27: TEL. RIVERSIDE 9-4887

No. 41/27th Year



4th November, 1960

On Other Pages

United Lutheran Church Asks Nuclear Weapons Ban	2
Vatican Announces Stand on Voting	4
Archbishop of Canterbury Will Visit Orthodox Leaders and Pope . . .	5
Call For "Prophetic Christian Judgement" in South Africa	6
Ecumenical Patriarch Testifies in Treason Trials	7
French Protestants Ask For Negotiations On Algerian War	7
Documents	9, 10, 11

Plans Confirmed For WCC South Africa Consultation

(Geneva) - The consultation of leaders of the eight member churches of the World Council of Churches in South Africa on the racial situation will be held as originally planned in the Union of South Africa, probably Johannesburg, December 7 - 14.

Plans for the inter-racial, inter-denominational meeting were confirmed by Dr. Robert S. Bilheimer, WCC associate general secretary upon his return to Geneva following a week of meetings with leaders of the eight churches in Johannesburg.

The fact that it will be held in the Union means that Bishop Ambrose Reeves, who was to have been one of the delegates of the Anglican Church, will not be able to attend. Bishop Reeves, an articulate opponent of the government's apartheid policies, was deported on September 12.

A request to the government by the consultation planning committee on behalf of all eight churches that he be allowed to return for the consultation was denied.

A unanimously adopted statement issued by the planning committee following last week's meetings said in part: "One delegate, officially nominated by a member church, will not be permitted to attend, and this has created difficulties in connection with the consultation. A request was presented by representatives of the Planning Committee to the government for a re-entry permit for Bishop Ambrose Reeves.... Even though this request was denied and the Planning Committee's wishes in the matter not granted, the Planning Committee adheres to the scheduled dates...." (See Statement I - Document attached.)

The aim of the Ecumenical Press Service is to keep its readers informed of trends of thought and opinion in and about the Churches and Christian Movements. It is therefore not to be held responsible for opinions expressed in its news items. EPS may be freely reproduced in any form with acknowledgment.

A companion statement of "Re-affirmation of Purpose" also unanimously adopted, was also issued. It noted that preparatory documents are being prepared by each of the member churches, and that each delegation will participate "as an equal partner with the others". It declared:

"It is not our purpose to convert one another to our own opinions, but as Christians to seek together the guidance of God in achieving a more profound understanding of His purpose in South Africa and for our witness in this land." (See Statement II - Document attached.)

The initial proposal that it convene the consultation was first advanced by the World Council last May. Plans of procedure called for each church to name five to ten delegates. It has been learned that each church has named the maximum number - making a total of eighty in all. Meeting with the South African church leaders will be a seven-member World Council delegation.

Announcement that the consultation will be held as scheduled has been widely hailed by the South African press. The Daily Mail of Johannesburg commented editorially, "The important thing is that the conference should be held, and held in the Union. In the crisis now confronting South Africa, the churches have an important role to fulfil. If at this meeting they can achieve better understanding and a greater degree of unity among themselves, they will have done something to strengthen the position and the voice of the Church. If they can also clarify and re-affirm their view on the religious, social and human issues which this country has thrown up, they will achieve something of significance for South Africa as a whole." EPS, Geneva.

United Lutheran Church Asks Nuclear Weapons Ban

(Atlantic City) - A statement calling upon all nuclear powers to agree on cessation of nuclear weapons testing, with adequate inspection and control, has been unanimously approved by the 22nd biennial convention of the United Lutheran Church in America.

The statement declared: "We call upon the governments of the United States and other nuclear powers to persist in the efforts to arrive at effective multi-lateral agreements on the cessation of all kinds of nuclear weapons testing with provision for adequate inspection and control.


"Toward this end, we believe that a moratorium on testing should be continued until every opportunity to secure such effective agreements has been utilized.

"We advocate this position not only because hazards to health will be thereby kept at a minimum, but also because agreement on the cessation of testing could serve to allay suspicion and provide an international experience in inspection and control which are deemed essential to the regulation and reduction of armaments in a manner that will not endanger the security of any nation".

The statement asked the governments of the US and Canada "to wage peace and seek the prevention of war simultaneously by (a) assisting the economically underprivileged nations...; (b) consolidating and extending their ties with free nations; (c) engaging with other governments in peaceful competition where important differences exist and in peaceful co-operation where fundamental principle is not compromised."

The draft was prepared under the direction of the church's Board of Social Missions with the aid of Dr. O. Frederick Nolde, a ULCA clergyman, who is director of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, a joint agency of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council.

In another action the convention rejected a resolution urging abolition of the death penalty as punishment for crime. The unexpected negative action - by a narrow margin of 248 to 238 votes - followed an hour of discussion and debate over a statement prepared by the ULCA's Board of Social Mission, which contended that the death penalty is not "an effective deterrent of crime".



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024

Principle opposition came from Judge Charles B. Zimmerman of the Supreme Court of Ohio, who said that "a good deal of misguided sentimentality" has clouded the issue of capital punishment. "I cannot oppose capital punishment," he said. "It can be defended biblically. It is just." EPS, Geneva.

American Baptists Transfer Property to Burma Church

(Myitkyina, Burma) - Burma, the first mission field of US Baptists, has become the first field on which arrangements have been completed to transfer all America Baptist mission property to local ownership.

The way was cleared for the transfer at the recent 92nd annual meeting of the Burma Baptist Convention which approved a systematic plan of transfer which had been worked out by the US church's Foreign Mission Societies and representatives of the various language groups within the Burma Convention. The transfer involves more than 160 plots of land, many with churches, schools, staff residents and hospitals.

In another session the Convention, which with a more than 12,000 attendance was the largest Protestant assembly ever held in the country, made plans to mark the 150th anniversary in 1963 of the arrival in 1813 of Adoniram and Ann Judson, pioneer missionaries to the country. The date will be celebrated as part of a five-year evangelism campaign which opens next year. EPS, Geneva.

Anglicans Face Problems of Shifting Population

(London) - The Church of England has reported that 370 of its 17,980 parish churches in England are not being used regularly for public worship and another 420 are expected to become redundant in the next 15 or 20 years.

"Apathy among churchgoers is not the cause," said Bishop Kenneth Hearley of Grimsby, a member of the church commission that drew up the report. "Our churches happen to be where people are not."

He said this was due to population shifts from the centre of big towns. The report said that of the 790 churches which are now or will become redundant, some 440 are of particular historic or architectural value. It urged establishment of a fund to preserve these churches. EPS, Geneva.

Korea Sends Workers to West Pakistan

(Seoul) - Three graduates of Ewha University, Seoul, Korea, will be sent as fraternal workers to West Pakistan. After a preliminary orientation period they will teach for a three-year period in schools conducted by the Church of Pakistan (Anglican).

In extending the invitation for them to work in Pakistan the Anglican body had originally offered to provide for their support, but interest of the students and faculty of Ewha University has been so strong that they have guaranteed the full support of all three teachers for three years. EPS, Geneva.

Anglicans Ask Review of Australian Immigration Policy

(Sydney) - The Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney has called upon the Australian government to appoint a citizens' committee to review the country's immigration policy.

A resolution asked that the proposed committee should consider whether the so-called White Australia policy should be changed "in the interests of Australia and its relations with South-East Asia". It warned that the present "restricted immigration policy" seemed to many people like "international apartheid or racial segregation by exclusion". EPS, Geneva.

West Pakistan Christians Aid Needy

(Lahore) - The West Pakistan Christian Council has sent aid to victims of two emergencies.

Meeting last week in Lahore, the Council authorized assistance of 7,500 rupees (US\$1,581) for families in Karachi who have been forcibly removed from their homes by government authorities to another section in the city where no shelter is available. The families, an estimated 150 persons in all, had reportedly been given warning six months ago that they should seek new homes, but had ignored the instruction. The reason for the removal was not given.

The Council also approved a shipment of 45 bales of clothing to be sent by air to disaster areas in East Pakistan where scores are reported in need as the result of recent cyclones.

EPS, Geneva.

Vatican Announces Stand on Voting

(Vatican City) - The Vatican has declared that the Catholic Church has the duty in certain circumstances to give political instructions to its members, because voters elect legislators who pass laws that can be either "good or bad" from the Catholic viewpoint.

The statement took the form of an article in L'Osservatore Romano, the Vatican daily newspaper. It said the synod which Pope John XXIII had organized in Rome earlier this year had agreed that "the Church has the right and duty to explain the faithful and moral obligations which they must respect as voters".

The paper commented that a vote is "a moral act" even more than a "political" one and can "influence the religious and moral life of a people profoundly".

Early interpretations of the statement to the effect that the principle does not apply at the present time to the United States, were reportedly viewed "with astonishment" by ecclesiastical officials. A Vatican spokesman pointed out that the article never mentioned the United States. He said that it did not say that the Church "can stand aside" in the United States or any other country, but that the church "could stand aside" in a country where all parties "offered sufficient guarantees of respecting rights of God, of church and of Christian conscience". The spokesman made it clear, however, that he considered such a hypothesis absurd and L'Osservatore Romano article clearly indicated that such guarantees do not exist in any country that admits divorce.

EPS, Geneva.

Syncretism Seen As "Dangerous As Secularism"

(Arnoldshain) - Dr. W.A. Visser 't Hooft, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, said here that "syncretism is just as characteristic of our time as secularism and equally dangerous".

He called it "the secret religion of intellectuals" in Europe and said that leaders in Asia also tend to favour this view.

Against this background, he stressed, the churches of the world are called upon to give clear testimony to "Jesus Christ - the Light of the World", the theme of the World Council's Third Assembly late next year in New Delhi, India.

Dr. Visser 't Hooft addressed a conference of seventy ecumenical leaders of the German churches at a meeting at Arnoldshain.

EPS, Geneva.

Polish Clergy Warned of Assistance Group

(Warsaw) - A Roman Catholic bishop in Poland has urged priests in his diocese not to join the so-called "priests group" which offers financial help to the clergy impoverished as the result of the government's heavy taxes.

Bishop Ignacy Swirski of Siedlce said in a circular letter that the group has government backing and is trying to "buy" the clergy by offering them charity.
EPS, Geneva.

Vatican Council Preparatory Commission Begins Work

(Vatican City) - The preparatory pontifical commission set up by Pope John XXIII for theological matters to be discussed at the forthcoming Second Vatican Council has begun its work.

Chairman of the first meeting of the group held recently was Alfredo Cardinal Ottaviano, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office. Father Sebastian Tromp, S.J., was its secretary.

It was announced last week that arrangements are being made for a special audience with the Pope for all members and counselors of the various commissions and secretariats preparing for the Council. A Vatican announcement said the audience will be the first meeting of the Pope with those whom he has charged with the responsibility for handling the Council.
EPS, Geneva.

Archbishop of Canterbury Will Visit Orthodox Leaders and Pope

(London) - The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Geoffrey Francis Fisher, will make an eleven-day visit to the Middle East and Istanbul, Turkey, to visit Orthodox Church leaders and to Rome to pay a courtesy call on Pope John XXIII.

Dr. Fisher will leave London on November 22 and will return on December 3.

In Jerusalem the Archbishop will call on the Orthodox Patriarch and other Middle East church leaders to "express in person the close friendship which has long existed between Anglican and the other Eastern Churches". He will also visit sites of Biblical interest in the Holy Land. During his stay he will be the guest of Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem, the Most Rev. Campbell MacInnes. On his return trip the Archbishop hopes to stop at Istanbul to visit His All Holiness Athanasios I, Ecumenical Patriarch of the Orthodox Church. His visit to the Vatican will be made following this.

A statement issued by the Information Office of the Church of England in connection with the visit quoted a recent statement of the Archbishop commending the interest of Rome in the movement towards unity and plans for the new Vatican secretariat on unity as "another sign of the times, and full of godly promise". (See Document II attached for full text of statement.)

The Information Office said that it is in the light of such considerations that "the Archbishop desires in the spirit of courtesy and friendship among Christians to visit the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Pope..."
EPS, Geneva.

Inter-Communion Issue Must Be Faced, BCC Told

(London) - A young Anglican theological student sparked off a vigorous debate about the practice of inter-communion at ecumenical meetings at the meeting last week of the British Council of Churches.

Mr. Stephen Pearce, a student at King's College, London, told the Council that the question of inter-communion "arises and it will arise at future meetings. Has the last word been said by our leaders in this matter?" he asked. "If so, the outlook is dangerous. If the bonds of denominational loyalty are not to be burst, a way forward has to be found." He said the whole question had fallen like a "bombshell" at the Lausanne Youth Assembly this past July. The 1,800 participants at the Assembly "regretted" that they could not join together in communion and asked serious study of the question by the churches.

Discussion following indicated a divergency of views on the controversial issue. The Very Rev. E.H. Lewis-Crosby, Dean of Christ Church, Dublin, made a vigorous and impassioned plea for the abandonment of any attitude which upheld the "fencing of altars".

The Rev. John Martin, secretary of the Student Christian Movement, said that it would appear that the youth of the church are being asked by their leaders to give them guidance in the matter. But this, he assured the Council, would not happen.

The Council later adopted a resolution referring the matter to the BCC's Faith and Order and Youth Departments for joint study. At the conclusion of the discussion the Archbishop of Canterbury said it was "the best I have heard yet..." but reminded the Council that the issue is not new, that it has been debated many times and that it is inseparable from the question of unity. EPS, Geneva.

Call For "Prophetic Christian Judgement" in South Africa

(New York) - Alan Paton, South African novelist, says that both English-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking Christians must share with the government in bearing responsibility for the "unhappy situation" in the Union of South Africa today.

He spoke at a question-and-answer session following a luncheon given in his honour by the New York office of the World Council of Churches. Mr. Paton attributed conditions in South Africa to "sinful men" wherever they are found, in churches or politics. He said, however, that leaders of English-speaking churches had attempted to exercise "prophetic Christian judgment" in the statements opposing apartheid (racial segregation).

Mr. Paton, an Anglican layman, said that apartheid was often expressed as a noble ideal of individual or separate development of the races. The policy of segregation in South Africa is currently called "autogenous development". The end of such a policy, however, was white supremacy, he said, "with all the humiliation and deprivation it involves".

He spoke of the tragedy of deluding oneself by expressing noble ideals in political policies and then shutting one's eyes to the actual evil consequences "which are so harmful and cruel to human beings".

The Dutch Reformed Church no longer attempts to defend apartheid on a Biblical basis, he said, but many members of the church believe that it is God's intent that the races should be separate.

The novelist said that many white people, both English and Afrikaans-speaking, in South Africa today were disquieted by apartheid though far too little expression is given to this unrest. This was true of members of the Dutch Reformed Church as well as the English-speaking churches, he said.

Affirming that he was not here to "give a gloomy picture or to be optimistic but to report the truth" Mr. Paton predicted that apartheid would come to an end within the decade. Forces both within the country and outside, elsewhere on the continent and in the world, would force a change, he felt.

"This change would in any event be drastic," he said. "But the question that preoccupies us all is whether it must also be bloody and violent."

Dr. Roswell Barnes, executive secretary in the New York office of the World Council of Churches, expressed gratitude to Mr. Paton "for increasing our understanding of the tragic perplexities of the situation". EPS, Geneva.

Ecumenical Patriarch Testifies in Treason Trials

(Yassiada) - His All Holiness Athenagoras I, Ecumenical Patriarch of the Eastern Orthodox Church, has told a Turkish Court that he was informed by the Government two hours in advance of the 1955 anti-Greek riots in Istanbul.

The Patriarch gave his testimony in the trial of former Turkish Premier Adnan Menderes who, with more than 400 members of his government, is being tried for treason for allegedly stirring up the riots for political purposes. Many Greeks were killed and their homes and churches burned in the riots. Mr. Menderes has testified that the riots were instigated by the army junta which overthrew him.

The Orthodox leader also said that two weeks before the riots occurred the Government had taken precautionary measures to safeguard the headquarters buildings and church of the Patriarchate.

A letter sent by the Patriarch to the Government a week after the events describing the destruction was read in court. The letter denounced the "terrible violence" done by "organized groups acting... under the very eyes of passive policemen". It said that 70 churches were completely destroyed by fire and the holy places were "desecrated in a revolting manner. One priest was killed and another molested.

It charged that "organized groups carrying destructive implements and acting in accordance with a definite pre-established plan, obeying orders given from a single centre, spread over different parts of the city... (and) under the eyes of passive policemen attacked the Greeks with terrifying violence, as if they were obeying a signal". EPS, Geneva.

French Protestants Ask Negotiations On Algerian War

(Montbéliard) - The Tenth Plenary Assembly of the French Protestant Churches has called for immediate resumption of negotiations on "as broad a base as possible" to seek a solution to the Algerian war, now in its seventh year.

The Assembly meeting in Montbéliard adopted by an overwhelming majority a statement which said that such negotiations should seek "an equitable status for all the communities which live together in Algeria, and a guarantee against all reprisals".

It said that if such negotiations should not reach a speedy conclusion, the necessity of involving outside mediators would become "inevitable".

The Assembly declared that the situation leads the churches to issue a mandate to President de Gaulle to appeal to Algerian leaders for proclamation of an early truce. It said that such a mandate should be issued if possible in co-operation with other French religious leaders.

The statement declared that the Algerian war has "divided our country, and... created barriers of misunderstanding between France and other countries of the world, especially those in Africa." At the same time in France, it said, it is producing a "moral and legal deterioration which is undermining the very concept of the State ... which incites those who have been given power (administrative, military c police) to use it for subversive purposes".

The statement drew particular attention to the moral perplexities of youth who must fight in the war. It said that it is not possible to say that "loyalty consists in taking one single attitude", but, added that, (the Church) feels bound to state that refusal to obey the authorities, which today is developing into an illegal attitude, could not be justified unless the State were completely perverted".

It said the primary duty of those serving in the army in Algeria "difficult as it is, is to bear witness among their comrades and among the whole population to the reconciling Christ".

It said they "ought never to consent to the degradation, by moral and physical torture, of the men against whom they are fighting", even if their enemies have done so.

A section on conscientious objectors says that for these persons this position "seems to be the way to make a clear testimony" and assured them that the Assembly's member churches would continue to press for their legal recognition. (See Document III attached for complete text of Statement.)

The statement is the second one on the Algerian conflict by French church officials in the past two weeks. Last week the French Roman Catholic hierarchy issued a declaration which also condemns desertion and subversion and denounces acts of terrorism. (See EPS No.40.)

Statement on Unity

In another statement the Assembly called upon the French Protestant churches to work seriously for unity, because "the present division... constitutes a serious obstacle to the accomplishment of the mission of our churches".

While recognizing the churches' authority to make decisions on questions involving doctrine, discipline and liturgy, the Assembly urged them to "respond to the will of Our Lord by indefatigably creating and extending inter-church contacts..."

Pastor Marc Boegner, president of the French Protestant Federation for more than thirty years, said new unity initiatives are imperative, and noted that the Federation has not made much progress towards this goal since its formation in 1905.

Pastor Georges Casalis, of Strasbourg, also pointed to the urgency of the problem. "The divorce between the official Church and the real Church is growing more serious every day," he said. "As long as we are divided, this breach will only grow wider until one day we shall find ourselves all alone with our useless offices, councils and statutes."

The Assembly is held by the Federation every five years. Present, in addition to leaders of its seven member-churches, were representatives of various Protestant social work and other organizations.

EPS, Geneva.

Document IStatement ISTATEMENT OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE, UNANIMOUSLY
ADOPTED, OCTOBER 25, 1960

We are agreed that this Consultation initiated by the World Council of Churches should be held in the Union of South Africa as the discussion and worship of such an inter-racial and interdenominational meeting will have a greater impact if it is held within the Union. It is a consultation on certain great issues facing the South African churches in their witness in the modern world. From the beginning, it has been planned that it be inter-racial in character, representative of the eight member churches of the World Council of Churches in South Africa, and that the delegates of the South African Churches confer with a representative delegation from the World Council of Churches. It is noted that this World Council of Churches delegation will be inter-confessional, international, inter-racial in its membership. Such a gathering, met to attempt a fresh understanding of the meaning of the Christian Faith for our times, constitutes in itself a Christian witness of importance, although it is recognised that as yet there is no common mind on the issues which form the substance of the consultation. We meet, therefore, amid disagreement, to seek the guidance of God in understanding more deeply His purpose for us. One delegate, officially nominated by a member church, will not be permitted to attend, and this has created difficulties in connection with the Consultation. A request was presented by representatives of the Planning Committee to the Government for a re-entry permit for Bishop Ambrose Reeves of the Church of the Province of South Africa, who is also a member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches. Even though this was denied, and the Planning Committee's wishes in the matter not granted, the Planning Committee adheres to the scheduled dates, December 7 - 14, 1960. Recognizing the urgency of the situation, the Planning Committee calls upon all Christians to support this meeting and its preparations in both corporate and private prayer.

Statement IIRE-AFFIRMATION OF PURPOSE

Adopted unanimously by the Planning Committee,
October 25, 1960

1. The Consultation is called to consider certain great issues facing the South African churches in their witness in the modern world. The letter addressed by the World Council of Churches to the member churches inviting them to this Consultation listed five such issues, and these constitute the agenda of the Consultation. Each member church is preparing a document dealing with these issues from its own point of view, and discussion at the Consultation will proceed on the basis of these statements.
2. The membership of the Consultation consists solely of official delegates from the member churches and from the World Council of Churches. Each delegation has been invited to come as an equal partner with the others and in this spirit to share in the discussion.
3. The Consultation will include those of widely differing convictions. It is not our purpose to convert one another to our own opinions, but as Christians to seek together the guidance of God in achieving a more profound understanding of His Purpose in South Africa and for our witness in this land.

Document II

The following statement has been issued by the Information Office of the Church of England in connection with the press announcement of the Archbishop of Canterbury's pilgrimage to the Holy Land and visit to Istanbul and Rome

During the past 50 years the Church of England has increasingly come into friendly relationship with many other Churches. Among them have been the Church of Scotland and the Free Churches in the United Kingdom with their sister Churches overseas, the Protestant Churches of Europe, and the Orthodox and the other Eastern Churches, with whom there is a long tradition of friendship.

All these Churches are members of the World Council of Churches whose Central Committee met at St. Andrews this summer. At this meeting there were observers from the Roman Catholic Church. The Archbishop of Canterbury, who attended, stated recently in his Diocesan Notes:-

"The pace is quickening. We must enter into the unity of spirit with Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians and even Roman Catholics. We all know that we must get together and learn to like to be together before we can seriously grow together.

"And, as was said on good authority at St. Andrews, the attitude in Rome itself to this movement towards unity of spirit and understanding is changing rapidly. Where there was ignorance and suspicion, there is now increasing sympathetic interest, and in some quarters a manifest desire (if I may so put it) to enter into the spirit of this movement to see what God can teach us all through it. A clear sign of this is that the Pope has set up a new piece of Church organisation - a new secretariat for the unity of Christians, of which Cardinal Bea is leader and Monsignor Willebrands (who was present at St. Andrews as an observer) is secretary. Such a permanent organ of the Roman Church established for the very purpose of maintaining and increasing contact with non-Roman Churches is indeed another sign of the times, and full of godly promise."

It is in the light of what he has written that the Archbishop desires in the spirit of courtesy and friendship among Christians to visit the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Pope on his way home from Jerusalem.

October 31st, 1960.

Document III

Translation of Statement Adopted by the Tenth Plenary Assembly of French Protestantism, Montbéliard, 1960.

The passions unleashed and the acts of violence provoked by the Algerian war have divided our country, and are creating barriers of misunderstanding between France and the other countries of the world, especially those in Africa. In face of this, and as the result of numerous statements by our Churches and by the French Protestant Federation, we feel impelled to insist on the need for justice and reconciliation under the Cross of Christ. We address this appeal to all Christians and beyond the walls of our churches to all French citizens, wherever they may be, for whom we realise our responsibility.

We think especially of the Christian churches in Algeria, of the difficulty they have in making their witness, and of the insecurity and fear in which their members are living. We wish to assure them of our fraternal thoughts and of our constant intercession within the communion of the Church.

We again draw attention to the moral and legal deterioration which is undermining the very concept of the State, and which is inexorably accelerated by the continuance of this war. It is an unfortunate fact that this deterioration incites those who have been given power (administrative, military or police) to use it for subversive purposes.

We confess that our partisan passions or our passive attitude, our nationalism, our self-interest or our racialism, have unconsciously aggravated a situation, which today seems to have reached an impasse.

In face of this situation, what is the Church to do in order to show that it belongs to the All-Powerful Lord who is Justice and Reconciliation? In the world the Church's primary task is to pray, to preach and to bear witness. Today this involves:

1. Exhorting every member of the Church to pray without ceasing for peace and for all who are personally engaged in this drama - soldiers, civilians, Europeans, Moslems - and to assume the concrete commitments which this prayer involves.
2. Giving a mandate to the President of the French Protestant Federation to take steps, if possible in co-operation with the other religious authorities in our country, to appeal to the head of the State, and to the responsible leaders of the Algerian nationalists to proclaim a truce as soon as possible.

In any case, negotiations must be resumed on as broad a basis as possible, in which the essential thing will no longer be a question of prestige, especially unconditional surrender or the guarantee of unconditional independence, but the discussion of an equitable status for all the communities which live together in Algeria, and a guarantee against all reprisals. If these negotiations should not reach a speedy conclusion, mediation would become inevitable.

Stricken by the deep distress which is causing increasing anxiety to those of our young people who have to bear arms, the Church, responsible for youth wherever they may be, cannot say that loyalty consists in taking one single attitude. But it feels bound to state that refusal to obey the authorities, which today is developing into an illegal attitude, could not be justified unless the State were completely perverted.

(over)

Document II (contd)

The Church reminds those who are leaving for Algeria, and those who are already serving with the armies there, that their primary duty (difficult as it is) is to bear witness among their comrades and among the whole population to the reconciling Christ. They ought never to consent to the degradation, by moral and physical torture, of the men against whom they are fighting, even if their enemies have taken part in acts of torture. We assure all those who legitimately refuse to do this of our moral, material and legal support.

To those who refuse to take part in this war, for reasons of conscience, we feel bound to say that in this situation conscientious objection - with all the penal consequences which it involves - seems to be the way to make a clear testimony. We assure them also of our support; and we shall go on pressing for legal recognition for conscientious objectors.

To all the people living in Algeria, who are passing through increasingly cruel trials, we again affirm our desire to share their sufferings and sacrifices, to give them more help, and to abandon our historic interests, our economic interests and our political grudges. We are called all together to discover the way to a just peace, and to fight for reconciliation between all men.